

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Council Motion - Renewable Energy In West Berkshire</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	03 March 2011
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	N/A

**Purpose of Report:** To report back the findings of the Greener Select Committee's deliberations into two separate but related Council motions concerning renewable energy.

**Recommended Action:** That the Council agrees that:

1. The Local Strategic Partnership are best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
2. That the Council's Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council's estate that includes school buildings.
3. That the Council examine ways in helping / facilitating others to take up projects under the Localism Bill.
4. That the Council investigates introducing a loan scheme to assist schools undertaking renewable energy projects.

**Reason for decision to be taken:** To respond to a petition to Council regarding renewable energy.

**Other options considered:** None.

**Key background documentation:** Report to the Greener Select Committee – Appendix A.

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Theme(s):

**CPT5 - Cleaner and Greener**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:  
Setting the Council's position with regards to renewable energy.

<b>Portfolio Member Details</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Hilary Cole
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	hcole@westberks.gov.uk
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	31 January 2011

Contact Officer Details	
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## Implications

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<b>Policy:</b>	This report identifies a need for a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy in support of UK targets and also explains that an overarching Energy Strategy is currently being developed for West Berkshire Council. Production of these Strategies / Policies will be done in consultation with local stakeholders and Council Services to ensure that implications for Council policy are clearly understood.
<b>Financial:</b>	The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy will improve the targeting of the Carbon Management budget, making this more objective.
<b>Personnel:</b>	None identified at this stage
<b>Legal/Procurement:</b>	The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy will provide a more structured approach to the procurement of goods, services and specialist support.
<b>Property:</b>	The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy should ensure that energy efficiency and renewables are considered as part of the scoping and design stages for building refurbishment and new building works where it is more cost effective.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment:</b>	None identified at this stage

# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the Council meetings of March 2010 and September 2010 the Council received motions from Councillor Royce Longton with regards to renewable energy.
- 1.2 As there was considerable overlap between the two motions it was agreed that they would both be considered as a single report by the Greener Select Committee. This report highlights the deliberations of the Greener Select Committee and their recommendations to Council.
- 1.3 The motions to Council are as follows:
- 1.4 “This Council notes:
- (a) That generation of energy from renewable sources must be a significant factor in any realistic solution to the problems posed by climate change;
  - (b) That the South East Plan sets targets for renewable electricity generation in the Thames Valley and Surrey of 140 MW by 2010 and 209 MW by 2016;
  - (c) That indicative targets for West Berkshire, derived from these figures by Thames Valley Energy, are 12.5 MW by 2010 and 18.5 MW by 2016;
  - (d) That the renewable electricity generating capacity in West Berkshire at the end of 2009 was only 0.4 MW, or approximately 3.5% of the 2010 target, a lower percentage than achieved by any of the other Berkshire authorities.

This Council therefore resolves:

- (e) To take urgent and concerted action to stimulate renewable electricity generation within West Berkshire with the objective of achieving the 18.5 MW target by 2016;
- (f) To be equally vigorous in seeking to meet emerging targets for the generation of heat and other forms of energy using renewable technologies.”

and

- 1.5 “This Council:
- 1. Welcomes the recent statement from Climate Change Secretary Chris Huhne that local authorities are to be allowed to sell surplus electricity generated by renewable technologies to the national grid;
  - 2. Notes that early estimates from the LGA suggest that across the country this could yield anything up to £100 million per year;
  - 3. Also notes that this will drastically reduce any disincentive to investing in photovoltaics and other renewables on Council buildings, currently imposed by the high capital cost, and indeed that it could provide a valuable source of income assisting the Council in maintaining its services in these difficult financial times;

4. And therefore resolves to move swiftly towards maximising the potential to generate environmentally sustainable green energy on its offices, schools, leisure centres and other property.”

## **2. Greener Select Committee**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Greener Select Committee on 14 December 2010 Members considered a report from the Council’s Building Energy Officer in response to the two motions to Council.
- 2.2 The report is attached as appendix A and should be used as a reference point to the discussions undertaken by the Greener Select Committee and the reasoning behind this reports recommendations.
- 2.3 Members were informed that recently there had been a number of developments relating to sources of renewable energy, encouraging administrations to adopt a more proactive stance to national and local targets.
- 2.4 The Select Committee were provided with background information setting out the legislative framework behind the Council’s current targets and the current position regarding powers and incentives to produce renewable energy.
- 2.5 As there was no overall local authority target within the South East Plan the Greener Select Committee endorsed officers recommendation that the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) be best placed for taking on the responsibility for a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
- 2.6 Even though overall responsibility for driving forward this strategy would be with the LSP the select committee also agreed with officers’ recommendation that the Council should have its own Energy Strategy in place. The Select Committee also requested the addition of school properties within the Council’s definition of its estates.
- 2.7 The Select Committee also requested that two additional recommendations be added:
- 2.8 Members requested that officers examine ways, under the Localism Bill, to help organisations and communities wishing to establish projects such as Community Land Trusts.
- 2.9 Members also requested that the Council investigate the possibility of introducing a loan scheme for schools wishing to introduce their own projects. This would enable schools to borrow money without having to get written permission from the Secretary of State.

## **3. Special Meeting of the Greener Select Committee**

- 3.1 The Council at its Special meeting on 31 January 2011, considered a report which was the result of two motions previously submitted to Council.
- 3.2 In considering the report a Member suggested that the report before Council did not, in his opinion, reflect the debate and decision of the Committee. Furthermore the minutes of the Select Committee had not yet been approved.

- 3.3 As a result of this information the monitoring officer suggested that the item be deferred and a Special meeting of the Greener Select Committee convene in order to resolve this matter. A meeting of the Select Committee was held on 16 February 2011 where the minutes of the meeting in question were approved un-amended.
- 3.4 At the special meeting of the Greener Select Committee Members agreed that although the minutes and thus the recommendations made within the report reflected those made by Members of the Committee, Members could propose an amendment to the renewable energy report at Council.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 The Local Strategic Partnership are best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
- 4.2 That the Council's Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council's estate that includes school buildings.
- 4.3 That the Council examine ways in helping / facilitating others to take up projects under the Localism Bill.
- 4.4 That the Council investigate introducing a loan scheme to assist schools undertaking renewable energy projects.

#### **Appendices**

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Appendix A – Report to the Greener Select Committee 14<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

#### **Consultees**

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**Local Stakeholders:** Councillor Hilary Cole  
**Officers Consulted:** John Ashworth and Adrian Slaughter.  
**Trade Union:** Not Applicable.